IN THE CLAIMS

This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Original) Method for the preparation of a silicic acid comprising extrudate, comprising the steps of:

i) forming of stabilized silicic acid, by hydrolysing a silicon compound into orthosilicic acid and/or oligomers thereof in the presence of a stabilizing agent, which is a quaternary ammonium compound, or an amino-acid, or an amino acid source or combinations thereof;

ii) mixing of the stabilized silicic acid with a carrier in an amount upto the loading capacity of the carrier for silicic acid; and

iii) extruding the resulting mixture thereby forming the extrudate.

2. (Original) Method according to claim 1, wherein silicic acid is orthosilicic acid and/or oligomers.

3. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—2~~, wherein the quaternary ammonium compound is choline chloride.

4. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—2~~, wherein the amino-acid is proline, serine, lysine, arginine, glycine or combinations thereof.

5. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—2~~, wherein the amino acid source is a polypeptide or a protein hydrolysate.

6. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—5~~, wherein the stabilized silicic acid comprises a silicon content of 2.5-3.5% by volume, a choline content of 65-75% by weight and a water content of 15-25% by weight.

7. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—6~~, wherein the carrier is mixed with the stabilised silicic acid in a ratio of 65-50% and 35-50% respectively.

8. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—7~~, wherein the carrier is cellulose or a derivatives thereof such as microcrystalline cellulose, hydroxypropylcellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, carboxymethylcellulose, and cellulose gum and/or other carriers or combinations selected from sugars such as lactose, pectines and alglnates, poly- and oligosaccharaides such as malto-dextrine, glucans and derivatives thereof, starch and derivatives thereof, and natural and semi-synthetic fibers, protein and protein hydrolysates.

9. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—8~~,

wherein the carrier is microcrystalline cellulose and the loading capacity for stabilised silicic acid < 50%.

10. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 1~~—9~~, wherein the extrudate is spheronized into particles.

11. (Currently Amended) Method according to claims 1~~—10~~, wherein the particles are dried, preferably having a particle size between about 800 to about 1200 µm.

12. (Currently Amended) Extrudates obtainable with the method according to claim~~s~~ 1~~—11~~.

13. (Original) An extrudate according to claim 12 for use in the production of animal feed, feed supplement, human food and/or food supplement and of a pharmaceutical or cosmetic preparation, and for the treatment of infections, nails, hair, skin, teeth, collagen, connective tissue, bones, osteopenia, cell generation and degenerative (ageing) processes.

14. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising an extrudate according to claim 12.

15. (New) Method according to claim 2, wherein the quaternary ammonium compound is choline chloride.

16. (New) Method according to claim 2, wherein the

amino-acid is proline, serine, lysine, arginine, glycine or combinations thereof.

17. (New) Method according to claim 2, wherein the amino acid source is a polypeptide or a protein hydrolysate.

18. (New) Extrudates obtainable with the method according to claim 2.

19. (New) An extrudate according to claim 18 for use in the production of animal feed, feed supplement, human food and/or food supplement and of a pharmaceutical or cosmetic preparation, and for the treatment of infections, nails, hair, skin, teeth, collagen, connective tissue, bones, osteopenia, cell generation and degenerative (ageing) processes.

20. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising an extrudate according to claim 18.